

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 322

July 21, 1995, 12:20 p.m.
Page S-10469 Temp. Record

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS/Family Housing-Construction Cut

SUBJECT: Military Construction Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 . . . H.R. 1817. Burns motion to table the Bingaman amendment No. 1834.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 77-18

SYNOPSIS: As reported, H.R. 1817, the Military Construction Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996, will appropriate \$11.16 billion for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense. This amount is \$461 million more than requested, \$18 million less than appropriated by the House (though the House, unlike the Senate, did not move an appropriation of \$161 from the Defense Appropriations bill to this bill), and \$2.4 billion over the amount appropriated for FY 1995.

The Bingaman amendment would reduce the total amount appropriated for military construction and family housing by \$300 million.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Burns moved to table the Bingaman amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The Bingaman amendment would cut \$300 million from the bill because the bill will spend more than the President proposed. However, that greater spending is justified. This bill has higher funding than the President's proposed bill because it will provide more funding for the Guard and Reserves and for military housing. Both increases are warranted. The Administration requested only \$182 million for the Guard and Reserves. Last year's funding level was \$574 million. The President's proposal was not serious—he deliberately short-changed the needs of these important elements of the Armed Forces so that his overall funding level would look more frugal. Part of the fault lies with the Pentagon, which traditionally asks for enough funds for active duty infrastructure

(See other side)

YEAS (77)				NAYS (18)		NOT VOTING (5)	
Republican (47 or 90%)		Democrats (30 or 70%)		Republicans (5 or 10%)	Democrats (13 or 30%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (3)
Abraham	Hutchison	Akaka	Hollings	Brown	Bingaman	Ashcroft- ²	Feinstein- ²
Bennett	Inhofe	Baucus	Johnston	Grams	Boxer	Faircloth- ²	Inouye- ²
Bond	Jeffords	Biden	Kennedy	Kyl	Bradley		Nunn- ²
Burns	Kassebaum	Breaux	Kerry	McCain	Feingold		
Campbell	Kempthorne	Bryan	Lautenberg	Roth	Glenn		
Chafee	Lott	Bumpers	Leahy		Graham		
Coats	Lugar	Byrd	Lieberman		Kerrey		
Cochran	Mack	Conrad	Mikulski		Kohl		
Cohen	McConnell	Daschle	Murray		Levin		
Coverdell	Murkowski	Dodd	Pell		Moseley-Braun		
Craig	Nickles	Dorgan	Pryor		Moynihan		
D'Amato	Packwood	Exon	Reid		Simon		
DeWine	Pressler	Ford	Robb		Wellstone		
Dole	Santorum	Harkin	Rockefeller				
Domenici	Shelby	Heflin	Sarbanes				
Frist	Simpson						
Gorton	Smith						
Gramm	Snowe						
Grassley	Specter						
Gregg	Stevens						
Hatch	Thomas						
Hatfield	Thompson						
Helms	Thurmond						
	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

requirements, but leaves the defense of requirements for the Guards and Reserves to Congress. We have not been overly generous; we will not cut as much as the President proposed, but we will cut 20 percent. As for military housing, we are inclined to provide more, but we need to stay within our 602(b) budget allocation. The need for improved housing for our military forces is extreme. Many servicemen and women around the country are living in clapboard temporary housing that was only built to last through the Second World War. Much of the housing for our Armed Forces is so substandard it would be condemned if it were in private hands. Perhaps even worse, in many areas the shortage of on-base housing forces service members to pay for expensive off-base housing. These men and women, who are serving their country and are ready to die in its defense, are paid so poorly that when they have to pay for off-base housing they frequently end up on Food Stamps. This situation is utterly disgraceful. Our colleagues insist that the housing for members of the Armed Forces is not a high priority for the Defense Department; if so, we suggest that the Department reorder its priorities. This bill responsibly stays within its allocation, it funds projects only if they meet certain strict, specified criteria to make certain they are meritorious, and it addresses very real needs. A \$300 million cut is unwarranted; we therefore urge the rejection of this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The Bingaman amendment would cut \$300 million from this bill to bring it closer to the amount requested by the President. The President's request was already substantially higher than last year's spending level. It added \$1.2 billion more for the base closure account and \$605 million more for military family housing. The Senate bill will reject around \$400 million of the President's spending requests, will replace them with its own earmarks, and will then add another \$300 million earmarks on top of that amount. This extra spending is unwise. In fairness, all of the earmarked projects have been selected based on their merit--none of them represent typical porkbarrel spending. Still, in these tight budgetary times, if we are going to increase spending on the military we imagine that the military has quite a few more important items than spending on the reserves or spending on barracks, which are the main areas that see increased funding in this bill. In our opinion, this bill simply spends too much. The Bingaman amendment would cut funding to a more reasonable amount, and therefore merits our support.